

RECKLESS RALPH'S

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

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REMINISCENCES OF OUR DIME NOVEL DAYS

By E. T. Gossett

Cerro Gordo, Illinois

"There was a keen, sharp crack of a rifle, and three redskins bit the dust!" The foregoing may be slightly exaggerated, but on the whole is typical of the way the authors of our old "blood and thunder thrillers" used to start their stories. It wasn't necessary to read through several pages of tiresome description, before coming to the action in the stories. They started off with a "bang," (sometimes it was two or three bangs, with the war whoops of a band of painted savages thrown in for good measure), and the interest never lagged until the last paragraph of the final chapter was reached.

That the stories were sensational cannot be disputed. That's one reason why our parents were so opposed to our reading them, and why we youngsters were so determined to—and did—read them. Various writers have advanced theories for this parental objection to the class of literature available to we youngsters of the 80's and 90's, but compared to the avalanche of smut and gangster stories available to the youth of today, the old "dime" novels of our time were models of decency and rectitude. The heroine was always a "perfect lady," and remained so, while the hero always stood ready to protect her and to defend her virtue, even to the last drop of his blood. The writer has read literally hundreds upon hundreds of these old time nov-

els, and does not recall of a single instance where the much criticised authors of our day made any use of the smut and suggestive situations so much in vogue today.

The stories always pointed a moral, too. Right always triumphed in the end. The wicked were punished and virtue was rewarded. If our parents, who feared our morals would be corrupted by reading the "blood and thunder" literature of our day, were alive now, they would probably start a movement to erect monuments to such men as Erastus Beadle, Frank Tousey and Norman L. Munro.

Probably one of the basic reasons for this parental objection to the sort of literature we were so fond of, was that an occasional youngster, took his reading too seriously, would sometimes decide to go west and kill Indians. Some did start, but generally they were found back at the family table, after a few days, and after missing the home food for a few meals. The writer admits that he toyed with the idea for a time when he was about 13 or 14 years of age. Saving up his earnings, which were small and far between in those days, he finally managed to accumulate 50c, thirty-five of which he gave to an older boy for an old 22-cal. revolver, which wouldn't revolve except when turned by hand. The remaining 15c went for a box of 50 22-cal. cartridges.

Going to a secluded spot on the farm he decided to practice up on a "quick draw," and also to test his marksmanship, before going west to face

tribes of redskins, bands of outlaws or even a grizzly bear at close quarters. After practicing the "draw" until he could get the gun out of his hip pocket about half the time without the hammer getting tangled up in his clothing, he decided to shoot at a mark, but found the gun had a few other defects aside from refusing to revolve automatically. The thing also had a weak spring, and it required from three to five attempts before the hammer would finally explode the cartridge.

Even with the writer's meager experience at that time, he realized that this would be considerable of a handicap, when he came to close quarters with some foe, for even with his most optimistic outlook in those days, he could hardly conceive of the enemy being accommodating enough to stand still and wait for him to make the preliminary snaps with his pistol before it finally exploded the cartridge, in order to be killed. So he decided to wait until such time as he was able to secure more dependable equipment, and before that happened, he had given up the idea altogether.

Which probably accounts for the fact that the "noble Red Man" has never become entirely extinct. But sometimes the writer shudders to think of what awful fates a lot of pioneers' beautiful daughters (they were always "beautiful" as I remember it), met, and of the hours of agony they must have suffered, waiting to be rescued by the fellow who never came.

REV. WILLIAM P. CHIPMAN

Retired Minister Was a Writer of Boys' Books

Hartford, Conn.—The Rev. Dr. William Pendleton Chipman of this city, retired minister and well known writer of boys' books, died today after a brief illness. His age was 82.

Dr. Chipman, pastor of the Olivet Baptist Church here from 1911 to 1916, was born in Mystic, Conn. He formerly was pastor of the First Church, Walton, N. Y., and Central Church, Pawling, N. Y.

Surviving are his widow and two sons, Charles P. of Hartford and William B. of Manchester.

MAN WHO PROSECUTED JAMES GANG IS DEAD

Kansas City—William H. Wallace, 89, the man who prosecuted the Jesse James gang, died at his home here late yesterday. As Jackson County prosecutor for one term in the 1880's, Judge Wallace broke down the Southwest's dread of the gang by bringing to trial William Ryan, one of Jesse James' lieutenants. Ryan was sent to prison for 25 years.

Two years later he acted as special prosecutor at Gallatin, Mo., when Frank James, brother of Jesse, was tried for murder. Frank was acquitted, but Jesse was shot to death at St. Joseph, Mo., a few weeks later.

NOVELIST FOOLED BY INNOCENT FACE

Sent in By B. Benners

John T. McIntyre, Philadelphia novelist, got a new slant on character study today.

For all his years of writing successful works, many of them dealing with Philadelphia life, Mr. McIntyre was fooled by a 21-year-old paroled convict in Magistrate Usilton's court.

The Boy, William Earl Roy had been arrested earlier in the day at the Reading Terminal. The blackJack and revolver police found, he admitted stealing from the McIntyre home at 250 S. 17th Street, while the novelist was away last Sunday.

The author of "Steps Going Down," which won the American Prize Novel Contest and \$4,000 last fall, was called to press charges. This at first he refused to do until Usilton told him that Roy had been arrested nine times before this one and is now on parole from Huntingdon Reformatory.

"I looked at his innocent face and thought he was just a poor young fellow who had committed his first offense," McIntyre said. "I wasn't going to prosecute, but now I certainly will. That fellow fooled me."

Although it wasn't mentioned in the hearing, McIntyre said he would like to know what the boy did with a bottle of choice rum which disappeared Sunday with his weapons. He was not asked why he needed gun and black-jack.

Roy, who lives on Newkirk Street,

near Thompson, was held without bail for court.

Among McIntyre's better known works are "Blowing Weather," "Shot Towers," "Slag," "Drums in the Dawn," "Stained Sails," and "A Young Man's Fancy."

HAS OLD BOOKS

Gene Arnold, NEC minstrel interlocutor, proudly exhibits two volumes of Beadle's Half Dime Library of Comic and Sentimental songs to friends about the studios. They were sent to him by H. Waldeck, Jr., of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who had them bound in 1878.

FOOLISH BUYING

I journey to the mart with speed, to buy some junk I do not need. I've many garments fit to wear, and I have goose grease for my hair, and shoes to burn and silken socks and costly ties in gorgeous flocks, and now I hasten to the store to buy about a bushel more. When stern depression held its sway, and I grew poorer every day, I used to think with sigh and groan of all the money I had blown, for things superfluous and vain, and such reflections gave me pain. I used to say to my Aunt Bess, "I've been a lunatic, I guess; in good times ever come again you'll see me drill with prudent men who only blow their chicken feed for articles they truly need." And now depression's gloom grows thin, and we behold Dame Fortune grin, and there are signs of better luck, and now and then I have a huck. Do I salt down that hard earned bone? I cannot rest till it is blown, and to the mart I gayly speed to buy some junk I do not need.

—Walt Mason.

INTERESTING ITEMS

Taken From The New York Weekly Over 50 Years Ago

Card from Mrs. Fleming to the New York Weekly (Street & Smith), May 4th, 1875. Brooklyn, N. Y. To the Public: In answer to numerous inquiries, I wish to say I write only for the New York Weekly, and have written only for the New York Weekly for the past four years. Serials bearing my name, published in other journals,

are serials written some twelve years ago, at the beginning of my literary career. Very truly, May Agnes Fleming.

A Boston Raid On Pernicious Literature. Boston, October 10th, 1873. The recent arrest of Hunter & Co., of Hindsdale, N. H. (Publishers of The Star Spangled Banner, a story paper) by United States officers, charged with circulating obscene literature, through the mails, has been followed by the arrest in Boston on similar charges of Charles Mansfield, Geo. E. Bailey, C. A. Hill and others.

\$56,698.81—This sum was paid during the year of 1872, for manuscripts which were printed and placed before every reader of the New York Weekly. Each yearly subscriber, for the sum of three dollars, had the opportunity of perusing stories, sketches, poems, etc., which cost us the said amount of \$56,698.81.

"A HANDSOME HARRY EPISODE"

By Harold C. Holmes

It is safe to say that any one who ever read a copy of Diamond Dick, Jr. Weekly has loved the character of Handsome Harry, the renowned "Sarpint of Siskiyou." In D. D. Jr. 246 Diamond Dick's Pay Roll; or, The Polestar Mine Conspiracy, good old Handsome Harry has a wild old time of it.

In the story Bertie had been confined in a room on the ground floor of a boarding house in Cripple Creek, Colo. Handsome Harry had found him there, got in the window and released Bertie who left after telling Handsome Harry to stay in the room and watch for developments. Harry lay down on the bed and fell asleep. When he awoke it was morning, a rope had been wound around his body and the cot bed so that he was helpless hand and foot. Just how this was done the author doesn't state, but anyway there Harry was; and as soon as he realized his predicament he let out a wild roar. Mrs. Hoolihan, a two hundred pounder, the landlady, appeared armed with a broom and she fetched Harry a couple of good biffs across the jaw with the bushy part of the broom, and when Harry stated his opinion of that, she gagged him by sticking the bristle

part of the broom in his mouth and propping the handle against the foot-board of the bed. Then she went to the window and called in the neighbors 'o see the "red-headed monkey" she had captured.

The neighboring ladies trooped in and remarked at length at what a large and ignorant looking monkey it was. Harry managed to force aside the "broom" gag and he told them just what he thought they were, whereupon the women seized brooms and mops and drummed a tattoo up and down Harry's length of frame. Harry fairly foamed at the mouth and in his struggles the bed broke down and landed him with a crash on the floor. This loosened the ropes and the old Serpent lost no time in making for the door. Now in the author's words:

QUOTE

As he dashed through the entrance, he collided with Barney, for whom Mrs. Hoolihan had been waiting.

Barney had been a long time getting home from his work that morning, for the reason that he had stopped to "tune up" at several places that he had found right in his way.

By the time he reached home, to be knocked off his doorstep by a stranger, was enough to make him see double.

Encouraged by his wife, he let off a war whoop, doubled up his fists and went for Handsome Harry good and hard.

This was what the old Serpent wanted.

He couldn't let himself out and do his best where women were concerned, but when the men took a hand he was right at hand and ready for anything.

Barney lasted about two minutes, and then the Californian knocked him into the family goat, and the two went caroming over an ash heap to the corner of the house, where they got tangled up with a barrel of rain water.

Then Barney got the mistaken notion that it was the goat that had slammed him over the ash heap, and the goat got the notion that it was Barney who had jumped at him just to pick a fight and the two sailed into each other.

While Mrs. Hoolihan was separating

her husband from the goat, Mrs. Casey caught sight of Patrick down the street, and waved distress signals with her sunbonnet on the end of a broom.

Patrick came on the run and he picked up Mickey en route.

"Phat is ut?" he yelled, his eyes on Mrs. Hoolihan, Barney and the goat. "Who shtruck me frud Hoolihan?"

"Th' red whiskered man, Pa," cried Mrs. Casey, "Lay him out, that's the b'y."

"Oi will," was Patrick's prompt reply, and in order that there might be no doubt of it, Mickey concluded to help.

They came down on the old Serpent on two sides, and, the instant Handsome Harry sized them up, he knew that he would have to do himself proud if he won out.

"Bring on the rest of the naybors," he yelled. "Ye're comin' too few at a time. Patrick, ye're built like John L., ye are so. Whar'll I hand ye one?"

"Any ole place yez can put it, a-cushla," returned Patrick, and Handsome Harry put one on the side of his head and made him hear nothing but "the sound of the sea," for three consecutive minutes.

Meanwhile, Mickey had run in a couple on the Californian — planted them back of his ear when he wasn't looking.

Handsome Harry saw stars shooting around in the sunshine then, and he thought the wall of the house was coming down on him, so he stepped over to hold it up.

"Ye got him goin', Mickey," cried Mickey's wife. "Wan more, me b'y. Jest wan more an' he won't be able t' tell what shtruck 'im."

"He's a puddin'," said Mickey, as he squared off for a knockout.

Handsome Harry was still hanging to the brick wall.

He was there when Mickey started his blow, but not there when the blow landed.

In some way the Californian dropped down, and Mickey's knuckles collided with the bricks in a way that made him yell, and hold up his injured fingers.

His wife started for him to render a little comfort, but Harry got to Mickey before she did.

Tripping him, he hurled him against Patrick. So forcibly did they come in contact that both went down and laid there.

And then came Terence, "boss knocker" at the Comet—a man who had fought more battles with his fists and won more knockouts than any other pugilist in Cripple Creek.

Handsome Harry brushed a sleeve across his dripping forehead and leaned against the rain water barrel, while he got his breath, and sized Terence up.

The women were all around Terence, explaining the matter to him.

Terence took in the surroundings—saw Hoolihan in the shade of the ash heap on one side and the goat on the other, both badly demoralized. Next his eyes encountered Mickey, who was having his wife pull at his fingers to see if they were broken; after Mickey, Terence's gaze rested on Patrick, who was trying to persuade Mrs. Casey to go for the priest so's he could die, "dacent like."

"Faith," smiled Terence, throwing off his coat, "a mon thot can do such shtrong ar-rum wor-ruk as thot is good enough for me."

"I reckon yore the last of the push, Terence," cried Handsome Harry. "Ye're a purty sizable chap an' I opine ye'll do well. Roll in on me, Terence. I'll teach ye a few ye don't know, an' possibly you've got one or two up yer sleeve thet'll be news ter me. Wake up, snakes, an' sound yer rattles. Hyer we go."

And a "go" it was, if ever there was one.

If some man had only been on the scene with a "picture machine" that bout between Handsome Harry, the California wonder, and Terence O'Brien, Boss Knocker at the Comet, would have gone down in pugilistic history as one of the greatest contests that ever graced, or disgraced, the ring.

It lasted fifteen minutes, with no intermissions.

At the end of that time the old Serpent had his man down.

Handsome Harry's eyes were closed, and he couldn't see, but some one told him that the Boss Knocker was down, and, as he didn't get up and resume

the attack, it was pretty sure that this was the true state of affairs. The Knocker was not only down, but "out."

END OF QUOTE

One of the Dick's friends Yawcob Augenblick, The Flying Dutchman, came along just then and taking the battered old Serpent by the hand he led him by all the back streets and finally got him to his room in the hotel where he left Harry trying to get his eyes open enough so he could see through them.

Yawcob went out and found Bertie and in reply to the question, "What's become of Handsome Harry?" Yawcob replied, "Id ain't vell mit him, I bed you, he's oop in his room rapping court-blasters on himself und shticking arnica all ofer him."

THE END

THE ADMIRABLE ARLINGTON

(Continued from January Issue)

Not since the era of Hunston, the Harasser of Harkaway, had such a devilish deviser and efficient executor of dastardly deeds performed between the cover of a novel. The name of Arlington was loudly cursed wherever novels were read, and those who had seldom or never perused the pages of a Tip Top, attracted by the clamor, kicked in with their nickels for copies and forthwith became addicts, joining the mob at the newsstands every Friday and struggling for the latest issue in the hope that in it would be found the welcome news that the handsome, sneering Arlington had somehow fallen into boiling oil.

Dick's unpopularity was forgotten. After all, the guy was a Merriwell, wasn't he? No true Tip Topper would stand off and watch a brother of their beloved Frank being pushed around by a—by a—well, by that dad-blamed Arlington or any body else, would he? So come on, gang! and the readers lined up solidly behind Dick, their former coolness toward him dissipated by the heat of their hatred for his debonair and daring arch-enemy. The circulation of Tip Top once more became a source of great satisfaction to the author and publishers, and the villain, paradoxically, was the hero of the rejuvenation.

It is possible that Patten, when he

invented Arlington and injected him into the pages of Tip Top, intended his villainous presence there to be short-lived. It was not in accordance with his usual custom to permit such evildoers to remain long opposed to the honorable characters in his stories. They were either quickly converted from their lawless ways by the noble example of the Merriwells, or came to a disagreeable finish. But Arlington was no ordinary scoundrel. He had been an inspiration, and Patten was quick to realize that he had something there. Somehow the author had given Chester the personality with which he failed to endow Dick; nervy, athletic, handsome, a born leader, and possessed with the determination to win at all costs. He fascinated the fans even though they professed the utmost hatred for him. So Patten gave him plenty of rope, an unlimited income, an unscrupulous mother, a tycoon for a father, a beautiful and virtuous sister, and a longtime contract as the super-scoundrel of the age. To complicate things good and proper, the astute author caused Dick and Arlington's sister to fall in love with each other. From that time on, Tip Top was in no danger of dying from decreased circulation.

Patten and Arlington kept up their good work for many years, until Dick, a student at Yale, had become more human and developed a personality. Then, having done a swell job, Chester was permitted to become Dick's friend and modestly submerge himself among the other faithful followers of the younger Merriwell, never to appear again in his former character. But the faithful Tip Toppers never fully trusted him. They regarded him with suspicion to the end. And perhaps their distrust was founded on a hunch, for it is interesting to note that in the last series of Tip Tops ever written by Patten, ten years after Arlington's first appearance, he describes the loss of Dick's entire fortune as the result of Merriwell's attempt to save Arlington's investments in South America by financing a revolution. Thus in the end, Arlington, unintentionally, as Dick's friend, brought about one of the results he failed, during years of scheming to

accomplish as Dick's enemy.

NEWS

John Reischmann has moved to 3048 N. Kolmar Ave., Chicago, Illinois.

Ruth Vinson, 1710 Spring Street, Little Rock, Ark., wants: "Thorns and Orange Blossoms," "The Duchess," "Tempest and Sunshine," "Lena Rivers," "Darkness and Daylight," "Capitola." The authors of the above are: Bertha M. Clay (Charlotte M. Braem), The Duchess, and Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth. Please send list and prices.

Mr. Wilson of Alliance, Ohio, wishes that all members and subscribers when writing, would address him as follows: H. L. (Buck) Wilson, Route 1, Alliance, Ohio. Why he wishes this address is because there is another man by the same name and on the same route, so be sure and add the BUCK to his name. Thanks.

George Sahr, 3724-63rd St., Kenosha, Wisc., says he welcomes all letters sent to him from old and new members. Send your novel lists, too. I will answer all.

H. L. (Buck) Wilson wants Wild West Weekly No. 566 and other novels. Route 1, Alliance, Ohio.

Be on the lookout for the big birthday number of ROUNDUP.

PARTIAL LIST OF ALL HAPPY HOUR'S BROTHERHOOD MEMBERS FOR 1938.

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4. J. EDWARD LEITHEAD — 528 South 51st St., Philadelphia, Pa.
5. GEORGE N. BECK — 2114 Scott St. Davenport, Iowa.
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